



**BIRMINGHAM COUNCIL
OF MOSQUES**

BCM

Charity no: 1182830

HELPING THE LESS FORTUNATE THROUGH ACTS
OF KINDNESS AND CHARITY

Charity projects

BCM Pound Projects update

This month saw the 54th project being completed to help others. This month we donated towards the care and education of orphans in Kashmir via an organisation called KORT. Here is their story: *It was the holy month of Ramadan and everyday routines were temporarily put-on hold for the annual fasts. Shops opened their doors later than usual, as children studied and played while counting down the days to the celebration of Eid. It was the day that hundreds of villages were destroyed, and thousands of lives were unexpectedly cut short due to an earthquake. Official figures from Pakistan show that 87,350 people lost their lives that weekend as they slept in following the pre-dawn Ramadan breakfast. Over 19,000 children were crushed under school buildings that had collapsed on top them while they sat in class. At least 38,000 people sustained life changing injuries, and almost 3.5 million people fled their homes to seek refuge from the terrifying aftershocks. Human cost aside, the economic devastation that befell Azad Kashmir that morning was a massive setback for the region. Pictures of the disaster were circulated around the globe and within a few hours thousands of people responded generously. A group of friends from UK were amongst the international TV viewing audience who felt compelled to act. Thanks to the generosity of their families, friends, and local communities, they raised over £118,000 in just five days to provide tents, blankets, food, and medicine for the worst affected areas. Whilst they were at the scenes of devastation, they came across a group of children heading down a mountain with fear and anxiety on their faces. They had filthy clothes, no footwear and were hungry for food. When asked about their situation, the children said they were survivors from*

the mountain villages who witnessed their families being killed and had their homes destroyed by the earthquake. They were told by surviving village elders to go and seek refuge in the main cities as there was no future for them in the villages anymore. It was this experience that led these friends to start a charity called Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust (KORT), to offer long term support for orphans. The first group of children they supported in late 2005 were traumatised. It took time for some children who were affected by the deadly earthquake to emotionally recover. Many children came from remote mountain villages and therefore were below the national education standard for their age. This is when they aimed for emphasis on education to make sure they gave them the best possible chance to become self-sufficient and succeed in the future. In 2006, plans were made to build a purpose-built home for orphaned children where they can prosper through loving care and quality education. The government of Kashmir donated 13 acres of land to KORT in 2007 to build a

purpose build complex for orphans. With the blessings of the Almighty and the generous support of donors, and after 8 years of blood, sweat and tears, the construction of the KORT Educational & Residential Complex was completed in 2016. Today this complex consists of a school for up to 1,500 orphan children, a separate building which includes laundry, cooking and dining facilities where up to 600 orphan children can dine at one time, separate hostels for 500 orphan girls and 500 orphan boys, and an onsite Mosque for 1500 worshippers that has washroom and ablution facilities for disabled people. The orphaned children in their care have now developed into confident individuals who can enjoy life all over again.

A note to say that your money is not used as zakat but as lillah. Jzk.

If family or friends wish to help with £1 per month please pass on the details below:

Monthly standing order of £1 or £12 payment for the year.

- **Sort code:30-96-26**
- **Account: 33569168**
- **Name: Birmingham council of mosques**
- **Ref:charity projects**

